

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW, US

SUBJECT: DISSENT IN THE SOVIET UNION, CDU VIEW

1. ON FEBRUARY 23 DR. KARL CARSTENS (CDU), PRESIDENT OF THE BUNDESTAG, GAVE A BRIEFING TO THE PRESIDENT'S INTERCHANGE EXECUTIVES VISITING GERMANY AND COVERED SEVERAL TOPICS IN THE QUESTION AND ANSWER PART.

2. A QUESTION REFERRED TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER TO SAKHAROV.

CARSTENS SAID HE COULD NOT, OF COURSE, SPEAK FOR THE GOVERNMENT SINCE HE WAS OF THE OPPOSITION PARTY. HOWEVER, HE KNEW MANY IN THE SPD/FDP SHARED HIS VIEWS CONCERNING THE MATTER. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE FRG IS A SIGNATORY OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT WHICH CALLS FOR GREATER FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, OF TRAVEL, OF EXPRESSION FOR THE PEOPLE OF ALL THE SIGNATORY NATIONS. HE SAID HE WAS HAPPY THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD WRITTEN THE LETTER HE DID TO SAKHAROV BECAUSE HE FELT THAT LEADERS IN THE FREE WORLD SHOULD SPEAK OUT AGAINST OPPRESSION ANYWHERE. HE RECOGNIZED THE RISKS IN TAKING TOO HIGH A MORAL

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TONE IN THE CONDUCT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THE FINE LINE THAT EXISTS BETWEEN GIVING MORAL SUPPORT TO DISSIDENTS AND INTERVENTION IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE COUNTRIES WHERE THEY LIVE. HOWEVER, HE REPEATED THAT HE SUPPORTED CARTER'S VIEWS, AND HE FELT THAT SUCH EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN, AS WELL AS CRITICISM BY THE MEDIA AND PRIVATE

CITIZENS IN THE WEST HAVE A SALUTARY EFFECT
IN THE SOVIET UNION.

3. HE THEN TOLD THE GROUP THAT HE HAD MET VLADIMIR
BUKOVSKY RECENTLY AND HAD HAD A LONG DISCUSSION WITH
HIM ABOUT DISSENT IN THE SOVIET UNION. BUKOVSKY
TOLD HIM THAT CRITICISM FROM THE WEST OF THE SOVIET
UNION'S REPRESSION OF FREE SPEECH, TRAVEL, ETC. DID
HAVE AN IMPACT. WHILE HE WAS IN PRISON (OR AN ASYLUM),
HIS JAILERS FREQUENTLY TOLD HIM ABOUT CRITICISM OF HIS
ARREST AND DETENTION IN WESTERN RADIO BROADCASTS WHICH
THEY HAD HEARD THEMSELVES OR HEARD ABOUT FROM OTHERS.
INVARIABLY THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD AND TREATMENT OF HIM
IMPROVED FOR A TIME, MAYBE A FEW DAYS OR A WEEK.
BUKOVSKY, ACCORDING TO CARSTENS, GOT THE DISTINCT
IMPRESSION THAT SOME OF THE JAILERS WERE CONCERNED
ABOUT BEING TOO HARSH IN CASE THINGS SHOULD CHANGE
AND THE "OUTS" WERE IN. BUKOVSKY'S POINT WAS TWO-FOLD:
SUCH EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD
BOOSTED THE MORALE OF THE DISSENTERS AND LESSENERED
THE SEVERITY OF THE TREATMENT THEY RECEIVED FROM THE
GOVERNMENT.
STOESSEL

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